

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4-9, 12-14, 11-14, 16 and 17, and add new claims 18-20 as shown in the following list of claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A communication station adapted for contactless communication with transponders and with further communication stations, comprising:

first protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to station-transponder protocol, the first protocol-executing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to effect communication between the communication station and at least one transponder while observing the station-transponder protocol;

second protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to a station-station protocol that differs from the station-transponder protocol in respect of at least one protocol parameter, the second protocol-executing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to effect communication between the communication station and at least one further communication station while observing the station-station protocol;

first signal-processing means electrically connected to the first protocol-executing means, the first signal-processing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for contactless station-transponder communication, the first signal-processing means being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication;

second signal-processing means electrically connected to the second protocol-executing means, the second signal-processing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication; and

27 transmission means electrically connected to the first and second signal-  
28 processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-  
29 transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station  
30 communication to and from the first and second signal-processing means, the  
31 transmission means being configured ~~adapted~~ to receive and transmit  
32 electromagnetic signals for contactless communication with the transponders and  
33 the further communication systems.

1 2. (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 1,  
2 wherein the first protocol-executing means have energy-supply signal generating  
3 means that are configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply signal each time  
4 the handling of the station-transponder protocol starts, and wherein the second  
5 protocol-executing means have synchronizing-signal generating means that are  
6 configured ~~adapted~~ to generate a synchronizing signal each time the handling of  
7 the station/station protocol starts.

1 3. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 1,  
2 wherein the station-station protocol is operative to cause a minimal energy  
3 consumption at the communication station when communicating with the at least  
4 one further communication station.

1 4. (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 1,  
2 wherein the first protocol-executing means are configured ~~adapted~~ to function  
3 according to the station-transponder protocol that is configured ~~adapted~~ to  
4 communicate with a plurality of transponders, and wherein the second protocol-  
5 executing means are configured ~~adapted~~ to establish a communication connection  
6 to a plurality of communication stations.

1 5. (currently amended) An integrated circuit for a communication station for  
2 contactless communication with transponders and with further communication  
3 stations, comprising:

4 first protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to  
5 a station-transponder protocol, the first protocol-executing means being

6 ~~configured~~ adapted to effect communication between the communication station  
7 and at least one transponder while observing the station-transponder protocol;  
8 second protocol-executing means ~~configured~~ adapted to function  
9 according to a station-station protocol that differs from the station-transponder  
10 protocol in respect of at least one protocol parameter, the second protocol-  
11 executing means being ~~configured~~ adapted to effect communication between the  
12 communication station and at least one further communication station while  
13 observing the station-station protocol;  
14 first signal-processing means electrically connected to the first protocol-  
15 executing means, the first signal-processing means being ~~configured~~ adapted to  
16 code and decode signals for contactless station-transponder communication, the  
17 first signal-processing means being further ~~configured~~ adapted to modulate and  
18 demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication;  
19 second signal-processing means electrically connected to the second  
20 protocol-executing means, the second signal-processing means being ~~configured~~  
21 adapted to code and decode signals for contactless station-station communication,  
22 the second signal-processing means being further ~~configured~~ adapted to modulate  
23 and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station communication, ~~the~~  
24 second signal-processing means being configured to code and decode the signals  
25 using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless  
26 station-station communication; and  
27 a terminal electrically connected to the first and second signal-processing  
28 means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder  
29 communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication  
30 to and from the first and second signal-processing means, the terminal being  
31 ~~configured~~ adapted to be connected to transmission means for contactless  
32 communication with the transponders and the further communication systems.

1 6. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein  
2 the first protocol-executing means have energy-supply signal generating means  
3 ~~configured~~ adapted to generate an energy-supply signal each time the station-  
4 transponder protocol starts, and wherein the second protocol-executing means  
5 have synchronizing-signal generating means that are ~~configured~~ adapted to

6 generate a synchronizing signal each time the handling of the station-station  
7 protocol starts.

1 7. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein  
2 the station-station protocol is configured ~~adapted~~ to minimize energy consumption  
3 at the communication station when communicating with the at least one further  
4 communication station.

1 8. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein  
2 the first protocol-executing means are operative to function according to the  
3 station-transponder protocol, which is adaptive to communicate with a plurality of  
4 transponders, and wherein the second protocol-executing means are configured  
5 ~~adapted~~ to establish a communication connection to a plurality of communication  
6 stations.

1 9. (currently amended) A communication system adapted for contactless  
2 communication, comprising:  
3 a plurality of transponders;  
4 a plurality of communication stations, each comprising:  
5 a microprocessor configured ~~adapted~~ to execute a station-  
6 transponder protocol for contactless station-transponder communication with at  
7 least one of the transponders and a station-station protocol for contactless station-  
8 station communication with at least one of the communication stations, wherein  
9 the station-station protocol differs from the station-transponder protocol by at least  
10 one protocol parameter, the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to  
11 code and decode signals for the contactless station-transponder communication  
12 and to code and decode signals for the contactless station-station communication,  
13 the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate  
14 the signals for the contactless transponder communication and to modulate and  
15 demodulate the signals for the contactless station communication, the  
16 microprocessor being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a  
17 non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station  
18 communication; and

19 transmission means electrically connected to the microprocessor to  
20 transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder  
21 communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication  
22 to and from the microprocessor, the transmission means being configured ~~adapted~~  
23 to receive and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication  
24 with the transponders and the communication systems.

1 10. (canceled).

1 11. (previously presented) A communication system as claimed in claim 9,  
2 wherein each of the transponder is an RF tag.

1 12. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9,  
2 wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply  
3 signal.

1 13. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9,  
2 wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate a synchronizing  
3 signal.

1 14. (currently amended) A communication station adapted to communicate  
2 with a plurality of transponders, comprising:  
3 a microprocessor configured ~~adapted~~ to execute a station-transponder  
4 protocol for contactless station-transponder communication with at least one of  
5 the transponders and a station-station protocol for contactless station-station  
6 communication with other communication stations, wherein the station-station  
7 protocol differs from the station-transponder protocol by at least one protocol  
8 parameter, the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to code and  
9 decode signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and to code  
10 and decode signals for the contactless station-station communication, the  
11 microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the  
12 signals for the contactless station-transponder ~~transponder~~ communication and to  
13 modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station ~~station~~

14    communication, the microprocessor being configured to code and decode the  
15    signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the  
16    contactless station-station communication; and  
17            transmission means electrically connected to the microprocessor to  
18    transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder  
19    communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication  
20    to and from the microprocessor, the transmission means being configured ~~adapted~~  
21    to receive and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication  
22    with the transponders and the other communication systems.

1    15.    (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 14,  
2    wherein each of the transponders is an RF tag.

1    16.    (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 14,  
2    wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply  
3    signal.

1    17.    (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 14,  
2    wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate a synchronizing  
3    signal.

1    18.    (new) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second  
2    signal-processing means is configured to code and decode the signals using the  
3    FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication.

1    19.    (new) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second  
2    signal-processing means is configured to code and decode the signals using the  
3    non-return-to-zero code for the contactless station-station communication.

1     20.     (new) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the  
2     transmitting means includes a transmission coil electrically connected to the first  
3     and second signal-processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the  
4     contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless  
5     station-station communication to and from the first and second signal-processing  
6     means.